United Nations A/ES-10/588–S/2013/260

General Assembly
Security Council

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General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Identical letters dated 2 May 2013 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I regret to inform you of the continuing turmoil and deterioration of the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, due to illegal and provocative policies that continue to be pursued by Israel, the occupying Power. While serious regional and international efforts are under way to revive the path of peace and to salvage the two-State solution, Israel instead continues to choose colonization and confrontation. Even while paying lip service to the goal of peace, for not a single moment has the occupying Power ceased the oppressive and destructive measures that have for so long characterized its nearly 46-year military occupation.

As a result, the Palestinian people continue to suffer gross violations of their human rights, including through forced displacement and transfer of the civilian population, confiscation of their lands and properties, demolition of their homes, imprisonment and detention, and obstruction of their freedom of movement. In addition to Israel's perpetration of such crimes, its settlers continue their rampages throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, terrorizing Palestinian civilians, attacking homes, orchards and farms, and desecrating mosques and churches.

While all these issues were highlighted by the State of Palestine during its intervention to the Security Council on 24 April 2013, I am compelled to draw the international community's attention to several incidents during the recent period, which have raised tensions and concerns.

Hundreds of Palestinians have been forcibly displaced by the occupying Power, in addition to the hundreds more families whose homes and whose existence on the land is threatened by pending military orders. The largest of these recent displacements involved the eviction and forced transfer of 100 Palestinian Bedouin families from the village of Wadi al-Maleh in the northern Jordan Valley on

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29 April. The residents, as well as their animals, were completely evacuated and the affected area was declared by Israel to be a "closed military zone", which the occupying forces proceeded to use for military exercises that resulted in the scorching of hundreds of dunums of fields. That same day, Israel demolished four Palestinian homes in the Al-Tur neighbourhood in East Jerusalem, rendering homeless 24 members of the Gaith family, including five children and two gravely infirm persons.

Also on 29 April, Israeli occupying forces demolished a water well and facility in Al-Fawwar refugee camp in Al-Khalil, further targeting this vulnerable area. This was preceded by the destruction, on 26 April, of 22 Palestinian structures across the West Bank, forcibly displacing 28 Palestinians, including 18 children, and affecting another 120 people. Also on 24 April, the occupying forces demolished three Palestinian homes in Al-Arroub refugee camp and bulldozed several orchards. Demolition orders are also pending for part of a mosque in the Ras al-Amoud neighbourhood of East Jerusalem. In this regard, it is imperative to recall that, since 2008, more than 2,400 Palestinian homes and structures have been demolished in Occupied East Jerusalem and so-called "Area C" alone, displacing more than 4,400 people.

Further in this connection, Israel has persisted with its illegal settlement campaign, including through the construction and expansion of both settlements and the Wall that are fragmenting the contiguity of the State of Palestine and threatening the physical realization of the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders. On 16 April, the Minister for Housing of Israel publicly declared that Israel will begin construction in the so-called "E1" area of Occupied East Jerusalem. This was followed by reports on 29 April that the Ministry for Housing had approved the construction of an additional 120 units in an illegal settlement ("Givat Zeev") in Occupied East Jerusalem. Today, another settlement outpost was illegally established by Israeli settlers near the Zatara checkpoint in the Nablus area. All such provocations are regrettable indications of Israel's insistence on entrenching its occupation, rather than of its interest in behaving in a manner that respects international law and acting to bring an end to the occupation that began in 1967.

The Bethlehem area also continues to be targeted by this insidious Israeli colonization campaign. Military orders have been issued for the seizure of tens of dunums of land belonging to Palestinians from the village of Nahhalin with the objective of connecting two nearby settlements. At the same time, construction of the Wall continues in total disregard of the 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and numerous United Nations resolutions. Following the recent failure of a seven-year legal battle in Israeli court, planned construction of the Wall in the Cremisan Valley area near Bethelehm threatens a small community of elderly nuns, the Salesian Sisters, and their school and playground, which will be surrounded by the Wall and separated from 75 per cent of their land. In addition, at least 58 Palestinian families will lose access to their agricultural lands in the area.

These ongoing illegal practices have been accompanied by a wave of violence, terror and hate crimes by extremist Israeli settlers, who continue to target Palestinian civilians, particularly children. This has included: an attack by a group of 12 settlers on a 16-year-old Palestinian boy while he was walking to school in East Jerusalem (1 April); attacks on school buses in the Nablus area, injuring seven

children (1 April); an attack on a 25-year-old man near Al-Khalil and the running over of a 9-year-old boy near Bethlehem (15 April) and of a 60-year-old man in Al-Khalil (28 April); and, most recently, a raid on the village of Beit Furik near Nablus in which several residents were attacked and beaten (29 April), as well as the stabbing of a man by a group of settlers in East Jerusalem, an attack on a man in Bittin village near Ramallah and an attack on a school bus carrying girl students at the Huwwara checkpoint near Nablus, in which 20 people were injured (30 April).

In addition, the settlers continue to wreak havoc and destruction on Palestinian properties and land. Extremist settlers continue to vandalize homes, causing damage and sullying these homes with racist, hateful graffiti, and to torch olive groves and other farmlands. The most recent such incident occurred on 30 April, when revengeful settlers attacked Al-Ribat Mosque in Urif village near Nablus and yesterday, 1 May, when settlers ignited at least 57 fires throughout Palestine, destroying hundreds of olive, almond and other fruit trees and large areas of cultivated crops, destroying the livelihoods of yet more Palestinian families. Also, in this regard, on 27 April, Israeli settlers set fire to nine vehicles owned by the United Nations, as well as a Palestinian-owned car and three orchards in East Jerusalem.

Israel's illegal practices have continued to target the Gaza Strip, an integral part of the State of Palestine, which remains under an oppressive, unlawful blockade. On 29 April, Israel launched several military strikes against the Gaza Strip and, on 30 April, the occupying Power carried out yet another extrajudicial killing, when it targeted and killed Haitham Mishal, age 29, while he was riding a motorcycle in Gaza City. Palestinian fishermen's lives and livelihoods also continued to be targeted by Israeli fire off the coast of Gaza, affecting thousands of families. In addition, Israel has cancelled visits by Palestinian families from Gaza to their relatives in Israeli prisons.

All of these illegal Israeli policies and practices are fuelling tensions on the ground, inciting violence and provoking deeper mistrust. All of Israel's actions run contrary to international law and contrary to the efforts being made by the Palestinian leadership, along with their Arab partners, who have undertaken to revive the Arab Peace Initiative, and by the United States of America and all other concerned members of the international community to revive the path of peace and launch credible negotiations aimed at resolving all core issues, achieving a just, lasting, peaceful solution in accordance with the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders and realizing freedom and justice for the Palestinian people.

It is high time for the international community, whose commitment to this solution has been repeatedly reaffirmed — most recently by the adoption of General Assembly resolution 67/19 of 29 November 2012 according to Palestine non-member Observer State status in the United Nations — to act consistently with its long-standing principled commitment and in accordance with relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. A clear demand must be made on Israel, the occupying Power, to cease its illegal actions and commit to the path of peace. The international community, foremost the Security Council, has clear responsibilities in this regard and must no longer tolerate the occupying Power's empty pretexts, ruses and disdain for international law and will and must act collectively to hold Israel accountable for its violations and crimes. Only by being serious about peace can the international community help to make it a reality.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 460 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 5 April 2013 (A/ES-10/587-S/2013/218) constitute a basic record of the crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine
to the United Nations

United Nations A/ES-10/589–S/2013/269

General Assembly
Security Council

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7 May 2013

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General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Identical letters dated 6 May 2013 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Israel, the occupying Power, continues its oppression of the Palestinian people by means of all illegal policies, including, by violating their freedom of religious worship and access to holy places. This has again been starkly reflected in the recent obstruction of Christian Easter ceremonies, particularly in the Old City of Occupied East Jerusalem, where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is located, a holy site and major pilgrimage centre for Christians from around the world.

Tens of thousands of Palestinian Christians and their brethren who were attempting to access Occupied East Jerusalem were physically and verbally harassed, some of them beaten, at various checkpoints erected by the Israeli occupying forces in and around the city. Many of them were completely prevented and others delayed from participating in religious ceremonies to mark Holy Saturday on the eve of the Christian Orthodox Easter. This included the obstruction of a visit organized by Palestinian Christian groups and the Palestinian Governor of the Jerusalem Governorate with foreign diplomats.

Such aggressive behaviour by the occupying Power once again marred the Easter celebrations and the centuries-old rituals performed on this day. Moreover, Israel's actions constituted yet another attempt to undermine and deny the Christian identity and presence in the city, along with other unlawful measures it continues to pursue targeting the Palestinian, Arab and Muslim identity and character of the city. Such illegal measures include, but are not limited to, settlement and wall construction, home demolitions, evictions of Palestinian families, revocation of residency rights, excavations, restrictions on access to the city and the continued closure of official Palestinian institutions.

We condemn all of these illegal actions by Israel, the occupying Power, and demand their immediate cessation. On this occasion, we vociferously condemn all Israeli measures impeding access by the Palestinian people and other Christians and

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Muslims from around the world to the religious sites in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and violating their right to worship freely. The international community must be resolute in demanding an end to Israel's oppression and violation of the human rights of the Palestinian people and an end to all actions aimed at illegally and deliberately altering the demographic composition, character, identity and nature of the Palestinian land it has forcibly occupied since June 1967, including East Jerusalem.

While Israel persists in denying the freedom of worship of the Palestinian people, it continues to facilitate the demands of Jewish extremists to worship at sites throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in East Jerusalem, Al-Khalil, Bethlehem and Nablus. For example, just yesterday, more than 1,000 Israeli extremists accompanied by Israeli occupying forces descended in the middle of the night upon Joseph's Tomb, which is located near the Balata refugee camp, east of Nablus. The occupying forces protecting them unleashed tear gas and stun grenades against Palestinian residents in the area, causing several injuries. This was preceded on Saturday by a raid by hundreds of Israeli settlers on the Ras Karkar village of Ramallah, where they attacked Palestinian civilians and set fire to houses and olive trees. The Israeli occupying forces that intervened fired rubber bullets and tear gas at the Palestinians protesting this attack, and the settlers obstructed ambulances from entering the village to treat the wounded civilians.

These are but a few examples of the constant terror and provocations that the Palestinian people are forced to endure under Israel's occupation. We stress once again that the actions of Israeli religious extremists and settlers are stoking tensions between the two sides, inflaming religious sensitivities and undermining the fragile situation on the ground. We draw the attention of the international community, including the Security Council, to this volatile situation and the persistence of illegal Israeli policies and practices in this regard. The international community must send an unequivocal message to Israel, the occupying Power, that such illegal actions and provocations must cease and will not be tolerated and that Israel is wholly responsible for the negative impact and consequences of such actions on the ground and on the regional and international efforts to salvage the prospects for a peaceful solution.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 461 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 2 May 2013 (A/ES-10/588-S/2013/260) constitute a basic record of the crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations

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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Identical letters dated 8 May 2013 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I regret to inform you of ongoing violations by Israel, the occupying Power, of the Palestinian people's freedom of worship and the consequent fuelling of religious sensitivities and tensions. The latest provocation has been Israel's arrest and detention of the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Sheikh Muhammad Ahmad Hussein, who is the highest Muslim leader in Palestine and is in charge of Jerusalem's Islamic holy sites, including the Al-Haram Al-Sharif (the Noble Sanctuary) compound, which houses the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Today, 8 May, Israeli forces broke into the home of Sheikh Hussein in the Jabal al-Mukabbir neighbourhood of Occupied East Jerusalem and took him to the "Russian compound" detention centre for interrogation. The occupying Power alleges that the Grand Mufti was taken in for questioning about an incident of unrest yesterday at Al-Haram Al-Sharif, when Israeli occupying forces prevented Palestinians from entering the compound to pray, yet at the same time allowed a group of Israeli settlers to enter the area. Such unrest has become more frequent as Jewish extremists, escorted by Israeli occupying forces, continue to aggressively enter this holy site and to provoke Muslim worshippers. Continuation of such provocations could severely inflame the situation with grave, untold consequences.

Indeed, the detention of the Grand Mufti, who was released after six hours of interrogation, led to protests by Palestinian civilians calling for his release, along with the demands for his release by the Palestinian leadership and Muslim and Christian religious leaders throughout the country. We recall that this grave incident comes on the heels of Israel's violation of the religious rights, both to access holy sites and to worship, of Palestinian Christians during Easter observances a few days ago, when Israeli forces physically assaulted and obstructed Palestinian Christians, including priests, from participating in ceremonies on Holy Saturday in Occupied East Jerusalem.

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The Palestinian people and their leadership condemn the detention of the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem in the strongest terms and demand that Israel, the occupying Power, cease all such illegal actions, aggressions and provocations against Palestinian religious leaders and holy sites, and respect its obligations under international law in this regard. The international community, particularly the Security Council, whose duty it is to maintain international peace and security, must take a firm stand on this very critical matter and demand that Israel cease such actions and all other illegal policies in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and abide fully by its obligations under international law, including humanitarian and human rights law. Only such respect will convey whether or not Israel is serious about peace or insistent on continuing with this illegitimate military occupation in all its gross manifestations.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 462 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 6 May 2013 (A/ES-10/589-S/2013/269) constitute a basic record of the crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations

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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Identical letters dated 10 May 2013 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I regret to inform you of the ongoing rise in tensions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, as Israel, the occupying Power, continues its illegal policies and continues to permit the lawlessness of its illegal settlers. Such hostile, unlawful actions continue to provoke the Palestinian people and to poison the atmosphere between the two sides at a time when all efforts are being exerted regionally, internationally and by the Palestinian leadership to salvage the prospects for a peaceful solution based on two States, Palestine and Israel, living side by side in peace and security on the basis of the pre-1967 borders.

Once again, we convey our grave concerns regarding illegal Israeli measures in Occupied East Jerusalem that are clearly aimed at isolating the city from its natural Palestinian environs and altering the demographic composition and religious, cultural and historical character, identity and landscape of the city. We are particularly alarmed by and condemn ongoing illegal and aggressive actions at and around the holy sites, especially Al-Haram Al-Sharif and Al-Aqsa Mosque.

In this regard, on 8 May, the same day that Israel detained the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Sheikh Muhammad Ahmad Hussein, an act further aggravating religious sensitivities, thousands of Israeli settlers descended upon Occupied East Jerusalem in a vulgar display of extremism, hatred and racism. Those settlers were partaking in the so-called "Jerusalem day", a day provocatively designated by the occupying Power to mark its illegal, de facto annexation of the city. The actions of the settlers, which included the harassment and intimidation of Palestinian civilians and the chanting of racist and threatening slogans aimed at incitement, stoked already high tensions in the City and led to several clashes. Also, Israeli occupying forces, typically acting to protect the extremist settlers, assaulted several protesting Palestinian civilians and journalists covering the incident and detained at least 15 people.

At the same time, Israel continues its illegal settlement activities throughout the State of Palestine in violation of international law and United Nations resolutions,

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in arrogant disrespect of the global calls for a complete cessation of such activities and in total contradiction to the objective of reaching a two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders. This week, Israeli Government approval of plans for nearly 300 additional settlement units in the illegal settlement of "Beit El" just north of the city of Ramallah was revealed. These plans follow the evacuation of settlers from an outpost in the area last year and would result in a one-third expansion of the settlement.

We condemn such illegal actions and call for the rescinding of these plans and the cessation of all Israeli settlement activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. These actions only further confirm the occupying Power's refusal to cease its colonization and occupation of Palestinian land and to abide by its legal obligations, and underscore its disingenuous intentions regarding the peace process.

Bringing a complete end to the military occupation that began in 1967 requires that Israel act consistently with the tenets of peace, in both word and deed, and that it not speak out of one side of its mouth while continuing to behave with total lawlessness on the ground. This demands a stop to the settlement enterprise in all its manifestations, including the expansion of settlements, the establishment of outposts, the construction of the wall, the confiscation of land, the demolition of homes and the displacement of Palestinians, as well as serious measures to halt the terror and destruction that continues to be perpetrated by Israeli settlers against the Palestinian people and their homes, farms, orchards and religious sites.

We call on members of the international community, foremost among them the Security Council, to make these demands clear to Israel. Such demands are in line with international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention and the human rights covenants, with relevant United Nations resolutions, including of the Security Council itself, and with the longstanding terms of reference of the Middle East peace process. As has been widely recognized, we are at a critical juncture in the efforts to revive that process, making it imperative that Israel, the occupying Power, genuinely and tangibly affirm its claimed commitment to peace and the two-State solution. Otherwise, we shall soon find ourselves at a point where we must seriously face the alternatives.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 463 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 8 May 2013 (A/ES-10/590-S/2013/272), constitute a basic record of the crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations

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General Assembly
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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Identical letters dated 13 May 2013 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I wish to draw your attention to a statement released by the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem concerning the brutal measures and abuse by the Israeli occupying forces against Christian clergy and pilgrims in the Old City of Jerusalem last week during Easter celebrations.

The statement reads, inter alia: "We, the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem, watched with sorrowful hearts the horrific scenes of the brutal treatment of our clergy, people and pilgrims in the Old City of Jerusalem during Holy Saturday last week. A day of joy and celebration was turned to great sorrow and pain for some of our faithful because they were ill-treated by some Israeli policemen who were present around the gates of the Old City and passages that lead to the Holy Sepulchre."

Moreover, the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches stressed: "We also denounce all those who are blaming the churches and holding them responsible for the Israeli measures during Holy Week celebrations. On the contrary, the Heads of Churches in Jerusalem condemn all of these measures and violations of Christians' rights to worship in their churches and Holy Sites." The signatories to the statement included the following:

Patriarch Theophilos III, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate
Patriarch Fouad Twal, Latin Patriarchate
Patriarch Norhan Manougian, Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Patriarchate
Father Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Order of Friars Minor, Custos of the Holy Land
Archbishop Anba Abraham, Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate, Jerusalem
Archbishop Swerios Malki Murad, Syrian Orthodox Patriarchate
Aba Fissiha Tsion, Locum Tenens of the Ethiopian Orthodox Patriarchate
Archbishop Joseph-Jules Zerey, Greek-Melkite-Catholic Patriarchate
Archbishop Moussa el-Hage, Maronite Patriarchal Exarchate
Bishop Suheil Dawani, Episcopal Church of Jerusalem and the Middle East

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Bishop Munib Younan, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land
Bishop Pierre Melki, Syrian Catholic Patriarchal Exarchate
Monsignor Joseph Antoine Kelekian, Armenian Catholic Patriarchal Exarchate

We have repeatedly drawn the international community's attention to the detrimental impact of such deplorable, illegal actions by Israel, the occupying Power. As emphasized in recent letters to you on this serious matter, such actions violate the freedom of worship and freedom of access to religious sites in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. These aggressive Israeli measures are carried out routinely, even on the holiest of days for the Christian and Muslim faithful, and continue to stir emotions and already high tensions between the two sides and throughout the region. All such practices must cease and Israel must abide forthwith by its obligations under international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in this regard. We thus reiterate our call on the international community to uphold its responsibilities to compel compliance by the occupying Power with a view to upholding the rule of the law, calming the situation and promoting an atmosphere conducive to the pursuit of peace.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 464 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 10 May 2013 (A/ES-10/591-S/2013/281) constitute a basic record of the crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations

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17 May 2013

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General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Identical letters dated 16 May 2013 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to my recent letters and the démarche by the Arab delegation in follow-up to the emergency meeting of the League of Arab States held on 12 May regarding the critical situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, I must again draw attention to the provocations and illegal measures being perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, and its extremist settlers against the Palestinian people, their land and their holy sites, especially in Occupied East Jerusalem.

Palestinian demonstrations were met with typical excessive force by the Israeli occupying forces on 15 May, the day marking the sixty-fifth year since Al-Nakba (1948), an event in which the majority of the Palestinian people were uprooted and expelled from their homeland and forced to endure dispossession, displacement, oppression and human rights violations, a grave injustice that continues to this day. Several Palestinians were injured by Israel's use of rubber bullets, tear gas and sound bombs in various cities, including in East Jerusalem, Al-Khalil and Ramallah, as well as in Bethlehem, on 14 May, during a rally marking the anniversary of Al-Nakba near the Dheisheh refugee camp.

On this solemn occasion, we reaffirm the right of Palestine refugees to return, a collective and individual right in accordance with international law and United Nations resolutions, particularly General Assembly resolution 194 (III). We reiterate that this right does not diminish with the passage of time and that respect of it is central to the attainment of a just and lasting solution to the conflict. On this day, we also recognize the extraordinary efforts of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, which has assisted over 5 million Palestine refugees over more than six decades, through constant crises and upheavals in the region.

Tensions have remained very high in Occupied East Jerusalem in particular. Clashes broke out yesterday near Al-Aqsa Mosque as Israeli extremists raided the

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Moroccan Gate, attempting to enter Al-Haram Al-Sharif, and Israeli occupying forces escorted yet another group of extremists into the compound while at the same time arresting dozens of Palestinian protesters. These provocations come on the heel of several other inflammatory, violent actions and the constant threats made by Jewish extremists and settlers against the Palestinian people and Christian and Muslim holy places with the aim of inciting a religious dimension of the conflict. We thus once again call the international community's attention to these illegal, extremist actions, which are evoking strong emotions and aggravating already high tensions, portending an explosive situation, and urge measures to redress this situation and promote calm. The Security Council, mandated under the Charter of the United Nations with the maintenance of peace and security, has a clear responsibility in this regard that must be upheld.

At the same time, Israel is exacerbating the situation with its relentless colonization campaign throughout the State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem. Not for a single day have its illegal settlement activities ceased, nor have its settlers stopped their rampages. Reports by Peace Now, which monitors Israeli settlement activities, reveal that the Government is facilitating duplicitous "legal" measures to entrench four more settlement "outposts" on occupied Palestinian land, rather than acting to remove these illegal structures in line with international law and road map obligations.

We reiterate that such illegal actions undermine the contiguity of the Palestinian land and threaten to sabotage the two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders and the effort to revive the political process for its achievement. These actions also fuel the lawlessness of settlers, who continue their theft of Palestinian land. On 16 May, Israeli settlers brazenly attempted to take over land belonging to a Palestinian family in Nabi Samuel, forcibly placing a caravan on it. Other recent incidents include: an attack by settlers on a Palestinian man and his three sons near Nablus, on 9 May; an attack by settlers in the Beit Einoon area, where live ammunition was fired at several homes; a raid by extremist settlers on Burin village, on 11 May; and an attack on Sawiya village, on 13 May, in which settlers exhumed graves and desecrated the cemetery with racist, threatening graffiti.

Israeli settler rampages in the past week have also resulted in the widespread destruction of Palestinian land. The Palestinian agricultural sector and thousands of livelihoods are under constant attack as settlers target Palestinian farmers and their crops and orchards, particularly olive and other fruit trees. On 12 May, settlers deliberately drowned Palestinian land in Nabi Samuel with wastewater, causing damage to hundreds of olive and almond trees. On 13 May, settlers burned two dunums of wheat fields south of Al-Khalil, where 80 olive trees had been uprooted. On 13 May, settlers set fire to fields in Qaryut, destroying 15 more dunums and repeated the attack the following day, burning land and uprooting 150 olive and fig trees. On 16 May, the Israeli occupying forces uprooted over 1,200 olive tree saplings in Ras Karker and razed over 40 dunums of land.

We reiterate our calls on the international community to give due attention to these ongoing Israeli acts of aggression and provocation and to act to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to cease all of its violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to abide by its obligations under international law. The United Nations, particularly the Security Council, has a responsibility to uphold the rule of law and to contribute to diffusing the escalation of

tensions, which constitute a threat to international peace and security. All necessary efforts must be made to calm the situation, prevent further destabilization and allow for the fruition of current peace efforts.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 465 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 13 May 2013 (A/ES-10/592-S/2013/282), constitute a basic record of the crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

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(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations